



MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Heads, Program Directors, Program Administrative Assistants, Residents, RDoS & PGME Staff

SUBJECT: 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE
NATIONAL CERTIFICATION and LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS

FROM: Dr. Anurag Saxena, Associate Dean, PGME

DATE: March 13, 2020

Situation: The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the global COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic on Wednesday, March 11, 2020. **The situation is fluid, uncertain and recommendations and directives are constantly evolving.** The Government of Canada, The Government of Saskatchewan and the Public Health Agency of Canada are closely monitoring the spread of COVID-19, further [information for the public](#) and [information for health care providers](#) on COVID-19 is available on the Government of Saskatchewan website and will be updated as needed.

Background: The national certification examinations for both Family Medicine and Royal College specialty residents and the MCC qualifying examinations are scheduled over a period spanning spring of 2020. Both national colleges and the MCC are monitoring the status and adjusting to this fluid situation.

Assessment: These three national bodies are working collaboratively to ensure safety of all persons involved and limit the spread of the virus. As of March 12, 2020, there is one laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the **province**. The Public Health Agency of Canada and Public Health Agency of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Health Authority are closely monitoring this situation. At the **University of Saskatchewan** classes will be cancelled Monday to Wednesday next week, all teaching will go online /remote after that. Our **college and the PGME office** is working with all key stakeholders to keep abreast of the situation and ensure the postgraduate medical education for all our residency programs is aligned with recommendations (national, provincial, university, and SHA)

National bodies:

1. RCPSC: The examinations have been postponed until further notice.
2. CFPC: The examinations have been postponed until further notice.
3. MCC: The examinations have been postponed until further notice.

Recommendations: These recommendations are based on:

- a) certain principles [safety for all persons involved in examinations (residents, examiners, staff, volunteers), maintaining the integrity and validity of the exams, timely communication, personal protection and good citizenship, scientific evidence identifying practices to slow the spread],
- b) evolving recommendations and decisions at national, provincial and university/SHA level, and
- c) decisions made by the national colleges.



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Residents: Please follow communications from the national bodies (RCPSC, CFPC, MCC) and we will keep you informed as well. Please note all spring examinations have been cancelled (MCC, RCPSC and CFPC) until further notice.

Programs: Continue to provide rotations/learning experiences based upon residents' needs and readiness to challenge the examinations (when these are held -at the earliest possible opportunity) aimed at successful completion of residency in a timely manner.

Licensure post-residency: This is variable across all provinces, however, provisional licenses can be granted for residents who have completed the residency and are eligible to write the national certification examinations. We will be working with the CPSS on this issue and will communicate in the near future.

The [PGME office](#) will continue to collaborate with all our stakeholders as well as work with all residents, programs and staff during this time and will keep you updated as we learn more. The situation is rapidly changing and our decisions will be based upon safety and limiting the spread and working in collaboration with the national and local institutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anurag Saxena".

Dr. Anurag Saxena
Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education
University of Saskatchewan